

Seven Characteristics of a Healthy Local Church

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1- A healthy church is a praying church – Matthew 21:13 He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of robbers.”

The House of God is not a house of music, prophecies, entertainment, preaching or any other thing; it's a house of prayer. A healthy church has a leadership and a membership who knows how to pray, fast and wait on God. They see the spiritual benefit of calling on the Name of the Lord and they do it often. A healthy church will not have a mere moment of prayer; the entire meeting will be birthed in it!

2- The church recognizes all ministry offices – Ephesians 4 11:-14 “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. “

A healthy church will not only accept apostolic and prophetic ministry; it will embrace these offices and their corresponding giftings and recognize those in the fellowship who walk in these offices. There will be a clear atmosphere of prophetic anointing as well as apostolic structure.

3- The church doesn't cover up its sins, faults and failures; it's open to correction – James 5:16 “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”

A healthy church will accept correction when it's in error. There's no "We have it all together" attitude. A healthy church is a church which lovingly corrects one another and accepts rebuke from others who may see faults that the church does not see.

4- It's accountable; not to large organizations but to one another and to the leadership – Hebrews 13:17 “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. “ and Ephesians 5: 21 “submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. “

A healthy church will have leadership that is accountable to other leadership and sheep who are accountable to their shepherds. It's proper to submit to your Pastors and for your Pastors to also submit to those over them in the Lord.

5- It preaches God's wrath as well as God's Love. - Romans 11:12 "Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. "

A healthy church will not only preach the Love and Mercy of God; it will preach the fierce wrath and damnation of God against the wicked who refuse to repent. A healthy church will confront those who profess Jesus Christ and yet engage in sleeping around, homosexuality, lying, greed, unforgiveness, etc (1 Corinthians 5). Churches which preach both God's love and wrath are balanced and healthy.

6- It tests and exposes false teachers and false prophets - Revelation 2:2 "'I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false" and then in Romans 16:17-18 we read "I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive."

A healthy church will not shy away from exposing - by name - those whom God calls them to expose and name. They will not compromise on testing those who claim to be of God yet are false and counterfeit. They will do what the church in Revelation did; they will test and expel false teachers.

7- It's disciples produces disciples - Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

A healthy church is a church which preaches the Gospel (Grace that empowers us to obey the commandments of Jesus Christ). They invite people to church, events, etc, and aren't afraid to preach the Gospel to anyone with an ear. A healthy church is a multiplying church.